

The paragraph on page 51, lines 11-14, has been amended as follows:

a²⁶ Alternatively, the user terminal of any of the first through fourth embodiments may be provided with the functional feature of a server.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

- a²⁷
1. (Amended) An information utilization apparatus comprising:
 - a memory configured to store a delivered piece of information including encoded data and applicable time data defining a time period authorizing use of the encoded data;
 - a verification unit configured to verify whether the applicable time data included in the delivered piece of information in said memory has been falsified;
 - a decoding unit configured to decode the encoded data stored in said memory;
 - a processing unit configured to execute an operation on data decoded by said decoding unit; and
 - a control unit configured to control said decoding unit and said processing unit to operate at an appropriate time in accordance with the verified applicable time data in response to a request for an operation.
 2. (Amended) The information utilization, apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said control unit comprises a judging unit configured to judge if a current time is in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data.

3. (Amended) The information utilization apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said control unit controls said processing unit to operate when said judging unit judges that the current time is in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data.

4. (Amended) The information utilization apparatus according to claim 3, further comprising a reserving unit configured to prevent operation of said processing unit until the time authorizing use of the encoded data when said judging unit judges that the current time is not in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data.

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5. (Amended) An information utilization apparatus comprising:

- a memory configured to store a delivered piece of information including encoded data and applicable time data defining a time period authorizing use of the encoded data;
- a verification unit configured to verify whether the applicable time data included in the delivered piece of information in said memory has been falsified;
- a plurality of decoding units configured to decode the encoded data stored in said memory unit;
- a plurality of processing units arranged respectively corresponding to said plurality of decoding units and configured to respectively execute different operations on the data decoded by said plurality of decoding units;
- a judging unit configured to judge if a current time is in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data according to the verified applicable time data in response to a request for an operation; and

an operation command issuing unit configured to issue a command responding to the request for the operation to a corresponding decoding unit and a corresponding processing unit if the current time is judged by said judging unit to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data according to the verified applicable time data.

6. (Amended) An information utilization apparatus comprising:

a memory configured to store a delivered piece of information including encoded data and applicable time data defining a time period authorizing use of the encoded data;

a verification unit configured to verify whether the applicable time data included in the delivered piece of information in said memory has been falsified;

a decoding unit configured to decode the encoded data stored in said memory;

a plain data storage unit configured to store the data decoded by said decoding unit;

a plurality of processing units configured to respectively execute different operations on the decoded data stored by said plain data storage unit;

a judging unit configured to judge if a current time is in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data according to the verified applicable time data in response to a request for an operation; and

an operation command issuing unit configured to issue a command responding to the request for the operation to said decoding unit and a corresponding processing unit if the current time is judged by said judging unit to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data according to the verified applicable time data and said plain data storage unit does not store the decoded data, and to issue a command responding to the request for the operation to a

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corresponding processing unit if the current time is judged by said judging unit to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data and said plain data storage unit stores the decoded data.

7. (Amended) An information utilization apparatus comprising:

a memory configured to store a delivered piece of information including encoded data and applicable time data defining a time period authorizing use of the encoded data;

a verification unit configured to verify whether the applicable time data included in the delivered piece of information in said memory has been falsified;

a plurality of decoding units configured to decode the encoded data stored in said memory;

a plurality of processing units arranged respectively corresponding to said plurality of decoding units and configured to respectively execute different operations on the data decoded by said plurality of decoding units;

a judging unit configured to judge if a current time is in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data according to the verified applicable time data in response to a request for an operation;

an operation command issuing unit configured to issue a command responding to the request for the operation to a corresponding decoding unit and a corresponding processing unit if the current time is judged by said judging unit to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data; and

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an operation command reserving unit configured to prevent the issuance of a command responding to the request for the operation until the time authorizing use of the encoded data if the current time is judged by said judging unit not to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data.

8. (Amended) An information utilization apparatus comprising:

a memory configured to store a delivered piece of information including encoded data and applicable time data defining a time period authorizing use of the encoded data;

a verification unit configured to verify whether the applicable time data included in the delivered piece of information in said memory has been falsified;

a decoding unit configured to decode the encoded data stored in said memory;

a plain data storage unit configured to store the data decoded by said decoding unit;

a plurality of processing units configured to respectively execute different operations on the decoded data stored by said plain data storage unit;

a judging unit configured to judge if a current time is in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data according to the verified applicable time data in response to a request for an operation;

an operation command issuing unit configured to issue a command responding to the request for the operation to said decoding unit and a corresponding processing unit if the current time is judged by said judging unit to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data by referring to the verified applicable time data and said plain data storage unit does not store the decoded data, and to issue a command responding to the request for the operation to a

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corresponding processing unit if the current time is judged by said judging unit to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data and said plain data storage unit stores the decoded data; and

an operation command-reserving unit configured to prevent the issuance of a command responding to the request for the operation until the time authorizing use of the encoded data if the current time is judged by said judging unit not to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data.

9. (Amended) An information access control method for use in an information utilization apparatus having a memory which stores a delivered piece of information including encoded data, said method comprising:

verifying whether applicable time data included in the delivered piece of information in said memory has been falsified, the applicable time data defining a time period authorizing use of the encoded data; and

decoding the encoded data stored in said memory and executing an operation at an appropriate time according to the verified applicable time data in response to a request for the operation.

10. (Amended) An information access control method for use in an information utilization apparatus having a memory which stores a delivered piece of information including encoded data, said method comprising:

verifying whether applicable time data included in the delivered piece of information in said memory has been falsified, the applicable time data defining a time period authorizing use of the encoded data;

arranging a plurality of decoding units to decode the encoded data stored in said memory;

arranging a plurality of processing units respectively corresponding to said plurality of decoding units to respectively execute different operations on data decoded by said plurality of decoding units;

judging if a current time is in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data by referring to the verified applicable time data in response to a request for an operation; and

issuing a command responding to the request for the operation to a corresponding decoding unit and a corresponding processing unit if the current time is judged to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data by referring to the verified applicable time data.

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11. (Amended) An information access control method for use in an information utilization apparatus having a memory which stores a delivered piece of information including encoded data, said method comprising:

verifying whether applicable time data included in the delivered piece of information in said memory has been falsified, the applicable time data defining a time period authorizing use of the encoded data;

arranging a decoding unit to decode the encoded data stored in said memory;

arranging a plain data storage unit to store data decoded by said decoding unit;

arranging a plurality of processing units to respectively execute different operations on data stored by said plain data storage unit;

judging if a current time is in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data by referring to the verified applicable time data in response to a request for an operation; and

issuing a command responding to the request for the operation to said decoding unit and a corresponding processing unit if the current time is judged to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data by referring to the verified applicable time data and said plain data storage unit does not store the decoded data, and issuing a command responding to the request for the operation to a corresponding processing unit if the current time is judged to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data and said plain data storage unit stores the decoded data.

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12. (Amended) An information access control method for use in an information utilization apparatus having a memory which stores a delivered piece of information including encoded data, said method comprising:

verifying whether applicable time data included in the delivered piece of information in said memory has been falsified, the applicable time data defining a time period authorizing use of the encoded data;

arranging a plurality of decoding units to decode the encoded data stored in said memory;

arranging a plurality of processing units respectively corresponding to said plurality of decoding units to respectively execute different operations on data decoded by said plurality of decoding units;

judging if a current time is in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data by referring to the verified applicable time data in response to a request for an operation;

issuing a command responding to the request for the operation to a corresponding decoding unit and a corresponding processing unit if the current time is judged to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data; and

preventing the issuance of a command responding to the request for the operation until the time authorizing use of the encoded data if the current time is judged not to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data.

13. (Amended) An information access control method for use in an information utilization apparatus having a memory which stores a delivered piece of information including encoded data, said method comprising:

verifying whether applicable time data included in the delivered piece of information in said memory has been falsified, the applicable time data defining a time period authorizing use of the encoded data;

arranging a decoding unit to decode the encoded data stored in said memory;

arranging a plain data storage unit to store data decoded by said decoding unit;

arranging a plurality of processing units to respectively execute different operations on data stored by said plain data storage unit;

judging if a current time is in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data by referring to the verified applicable time data in response to a request for an operation;

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issuing a command responding to the request for the operation to said decoding unit and a corresponding processing unit if the current time is judged to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data by referring to the verified applicable time data and said plain data storage unit does not store the decoded data, and issuing a command responding to the request for the operation to a corresponding processing unit if the current time is judged to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data and said plain data storage unit stores the decoded data; and

preventing the issuance of a command responding to the request for the operation until the time authorizing use of the encoded data if the current time is judged not to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data.

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14. (Amended) A storage medium having program code instructions stored thereon which perform information access control when executed by a processor in an information utilization apparatus having a memory which stores a delivered piece of information including encoded data, said instructions comprising:

storing the delivered piece of information in said memory together with applicable time data not to be falsified, the applicable time data defining a time period authorizing use of the encoded data; and

decoding the encoded data stored in said memory and executing an operation at an appropriate time according to the applicable time data in response to a request for the operation.

15. (Amended) A storage medium having program code instructions stored thereon which perform information access control when executed by a processor in an information utilization apparatus having a memory which stores a delivered piece of information including encoded data, said instructions comprising:

storing the delivered piece of information in said memory together with applicable time data not to be falsified, the applicable time data defining a time period authorizing use of the encoded data;

arranging a plurality of decoding units to decode the encoded data stored in said memory;

arranging a plurality of processing units respectively corresponding to said plurality of decoding units to respectively execute different operations on data decoded by said plurality of decoding units;

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issuing a command responding to the request for the operation to a corresponding decoding unit and a corresponding processing unit if the current time is judged to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data by referring to the applicable time data.

16. (Amended) A storage medium having program code instructions stored thereon which perform information access control when executed by a processor in an information utilization apparatus having a memory which stores a delivered piece of information including encoded data, said instructions comprising:

storing the delivered piece of information in said memory together with applicable time data not to be falsified, the applicable time data defining a time period authorizing use of the encoded data;

arranging a decoding unit to decode the encoded data stored in said memory;

arranging a plain data storage unit to store data decoded by said decoding unit;

arranging a plurality of processing units to respectively execute different operations on data stored by said plain data storage unit;

judging if a current time is in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data by referring to the applicable time data in response to a request for an operation; and

issuing a command responding to the request for the operation to said decoding unit and a corresponding processing unit if the current time is judged to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data by referring to said applicable time data and said plain data storage unit does not store the decoded data, and issuing a command responding to the request for the operation to a corresponding processing unit if the current time is judged to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data and said plain data storage unit stores the decoded data.

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17. (Amended) A storage medium having program code instructions stored thereon which perform information access control when executed by a processor in an information utilization apparatus having a memory which stores a delivered piece of information including encoded data, said instructions comprising:

storing the delivered piece of information in said memory together with applicable time data not to be falsified, the applicable time data defining a time period authorizing use of the encoded data;

arranging a plurality of decoding units to decode the encoded data stored in said memory;

arranging a plurality of processing units respectively corresponding to said plurality of decoding units to respectively execute different operations on data decoded by said plurality of decoding units;

judging if a current time is in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data by referring to applicable time data in response to a request for an operation;

issuing a command responding to the request for the operation to a corresponding decoding unit and a corresponding processing unit if the current time is judged to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data; and

preventing the issuance of a command responding to the request for the operation until the time authorizing use of the encoded data if the current time is judged not to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data.

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18. (Amended) A storage medium having program code instructions stored thereon which perform information access control when executed by a processor in an information utilization apparatus having a memory which stores a delivered piece of information including encoded data, said instructions comprising: